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Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Annual Report 2009-2010

Government of Alberta

THE PREMIER'S COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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Vision, Mission and Principles

VISION

Alberta is an inclusive and barrier free society.

MISSION

The mission of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities (Council) is to advise on, report to and make recommendations to the Government of Alberta on matters relating to the opportunity for full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the province. It does this by listening to the opinions of the disability community, communicating these ideas and concerns to the Government of Alberta and the broader community, and working with governments, community organizations, and other stakeholders towards solutions.

PRINCIPLES

The Council has agreed on the following interrelated principles to guide the pursuit of its vision, mission, key strategic direction and strategic objectives:

- **Equal Status, Personal Contribution and Inherent Worth**

  The Council promotes activities that recognize the equal status of persons with disabilities as contributing citizens of Alberta.

- **Equity of Opportunity**

  The Council is committed to actions that remove barriers to full inclusion in society and promote full participation in community life.

- **Individual Responsibility and Personal Control**

  The Council supports systems that provide the opportunity and supports for informed choice and believes that all individuals, including those with disabilities, are responsible, within their individual capacities, for their own lives and their obligations as citizens.

- **Citizen Centered Planning**

  The Council endeavours to represent the disability community to Government in order to ensure that the voices of persons with disabilities, as expressed through Council, are included whenever policies or practices that impact their quality of life or status as citizens are being considered.

Letter of Transmittal

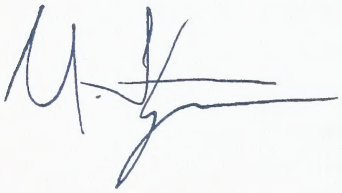
September 1, 2010

Honourable Ed Stelmach
Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Premier:

I have the privilege of presenting the 21st Annual Report of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities (Council). This report covers the activities undertaken by your Council during the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010. It is submitted in accordance with s.7 (1) of the *Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act* for your presentation to the Legislative Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,



Marlin Styner, Chair
Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Letter from the Chair

We are entering the third decade of work being done by the Council, and have renewed energy to build on the foundation that was set in the first 20 years. Great strides have been made in enhancing and promoting the opportunity for full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in Alberta. Council intends to continue this momentum in support of our Vision that *Alberta is an inclusive and barrier-free society.*

July 8, 2010 marked the two year anniversary of my appointment as Chair of the Council. The past two years have been productive, challenging and rewarding, and I am reminded every day of the important role the Council plays by listening to Albertans with disabilities.

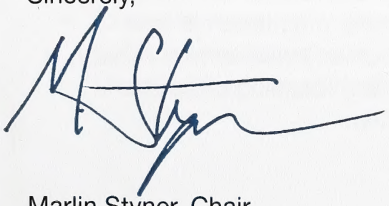
It was an honour to welcome Verlyn Olson, MLA for Wetaskiwin—Camrose, to the Council as Deputy Chair in spring 2010. He also serves on a number of standing committees. Verlyn replaced MLA Fred Horne who had been appointed to the Deputy Chair role in July 2008. Fred was a valued member of Council and we wish him well.

2009–10 was another busy year for the Council. With the 2009–12 Strategic Plan in place, much of Council's time was spent engaging in activities related to the key strategic direction that *Alberta is the model for best practices in universal access*.

One of the areas where Council has focused its energy this year is the promotion of Universal Design. Council feels this work will benefit not only people with disabilities, but indeed all of Alberta's citizens. Council is also proud of the role we played this year in providing advice to government on the Alberta Advisory Committee on Health and the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I want to thank Council members and the Secretariat for their hard work and commitment over the past year. Our team effort will help us continue on the path to full inclusion for persons with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Marlin Styner, Chair
Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Strategic Plan Highlights

The Council developed a Strategic Plan that aligns with government's business plans and helps guide the work of the Council.

The Council's key strategic direction is:

Alberta is the model for best practices in universal access.

Five strategic objectives fall under the key strategic direction:

1. **Alberta promotes and models the concept of Universal Design.**

   Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialization.

   - Council members received training on Universal Design and Universal Instructional Design at their October 2009 face-to-face meeting.
   - Council established a Universal Design committee to guide its activities in this area and also re-established a group of key stakeholders to research opportunities to promote Universal Design.
   - A presentation on Universal Design is in development for Council members' use within their own communities.

2. **All Ministries take action to accommodate.**

   The Government of Alberta is poised to model the behaviours that make our province a great place for all.

   - Discussions are underway with Alberta Infrastructure to identify various projects of mutual interest.
   - A Cross Ministry Universal Design Committee has been established that is led by the Council's Secretariat. This Committee includes representatives from the Ministries of Housing and Urban Affairs, Infrastructure, and Municipal Affairs. The Committee has developed the terms of reference and is looking for opportunities to work together on promoting Universal Design within government.

3. **Persons with disabilities are represented and supported in employment across Alberta.**

   There are many opportunities to promote employment of persons with disabilities. The Council believes that it could augment existing efforts to increase these opportunities.

   - The Council established an ad hoc Employment committee to meet this objective.
   - A partnership in Medicine Hat was created and plans were finalized to host an Employment Diversity Event on April 27, 2010.
   - Discussions occurred with Corporate Human Resources to investigate ways to increase opportunities for people with disabilities within Alberta's Public Service.
   - The Council's Secretariat continues to participate in the orientation of new Human Resource Consultants in relation to recruiting and retaining personnel with disabilities.

4. **Albertans understand and value a society that includes all citizens.**

An increase in public and personal awareness of, and connection to, disability issues is essential. This awareness becomes the base from which support for related activities and initiatives can be built.

- Council's annual awards for leadership and excellence (see page 8) were enhanced and nominations increased by almost 200 percent over the previous year.
- The development of criteria for selecting Award recipients was initiated and criteria will be in place for 2010 Awards.
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) events were successfully sponsored by Council in seven municipalities across the province.
- Communication plans for improvements were developed and implemented using internal resources instead of external contractors. Significant savings were achieved with an increase in control of the products.

5. **People with disabilities are accorded their highest level of dignity, independence and quality of life.**

This objective allows Council to respond to issues and opportunities as they arise for Albertans with disabilities and the Government of Alberta.

- Council was asked to participate in the public consultation related to Setting the Direction (special education review).
- Council was invited to provide responses to the Advisory Committee on Health and input into the Government of Alberta's response on the ratification of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- A process and mechanism for tracking Council's activities has been developed and implemented.
- Council's *Mandate and Roles* document was revised and signed by the Chair and Minister prior to the expected review date of December 31, 2009.
- Council's Code of Conduct was developed and approved by Council on November 16, 2009.
- Recruitment processes were developed and submitted to Council.
- A process for Council's self-evaluation was developed, implemented and completed.
- Plans were initiated to address results from the evaluation process.
- Council's processes and procedures for governance were enhanced to meet best practices identified by the Agency Governance Secretariat.
- Council appointments and legislation were extended to December 31, 2011.

Consultations, Tours and Meetings

Public Consultations and Tours

Appendix A contains a complete list of all Council members' activities in their communities over the last year. The following points highlight some of the major events that occurred:

- In June 2009, the Chair and Council's Director, along with key stakeholders from the disability community, toured the Bethany (College Side) facility. This setting is the result of a joint venture between Red Deer College and regional health services. The site represents an example of a novel building design and supportive living concept for young adults living with complex physical disabilities and provides many examples of Universal Design in action.
- The Chair and Director from the Secretariat provided an update on the Council to the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities (ACCD) and the Alberta Disabilities Forum (ADF) in October 2009. The presentation included an overview of Council's mandate and work.

Main Council Meetings

The Council participated in monthly teleconferences throughout the year with the exception of July 2009 and one face-to-face meeting in October 2009. A sample of topics that were discussed at these meetings included:

- Updates on Council's activities.
- Invitations for Council to attend specific events taking place in the community on disability issues or interests.
- Information received from the community involving disability issues.
- Current legislation related to the disability community.
- Issues arising from current events.
- Council's role in response to requests for action from the disability community.
- Responses to directions from the Minister.
- Development and progress of Council's plans.
- Discussions related to communication from and about the Council.
- Training on topics related to the achievement of Council's plans (e.g., Universal Design).

Committee Meetings

Council members are required to sit on either the Policy and Program Review or the Communications standing committees. Council members were also involved in either the ad hoc Employment or Universal Design committees based on their interest and knowledge.

In the 2009–10 fiscal year the committees met as follows:

- The Policy and Program Review committee scheduled meetings as needed and met seven times. The major piece of work from this committee was the draft of the Council's Strategic Plan. This committee also reviewed and drafted the initial response to the Alberta Advisory Committee on Health for the Council's review and approval.

- The Communications committee scheduled meetings once a month and actually met thirteen times. Some of the work this committee completed was the development of communication materials for the Council, including key messages for Council's Strategic Plan, the Council's *Disability in Focus* Newsletter, updates to the *Mandate and Roles* document, and coordination of the Premier Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Awards presentations at International Day of Persons with Disabilities' events around the province.
- The ad hoc Employment committee addressed the specific employment related goals from Council's Strategic Plan. The committee first met in November 2009 and once a month thereafter for a total of five times. The committee partnered with key stakeholders and completed the planning of an Employment Diversity event that took place in April 2010.
- The Universal Design committee commenced on November 24, 2009 and met a total of four times. The committee began to develop promotional materials and activities related to Universal Design.

Meetings with the Minister

The Chair and Deputy Chair meet with the Minister at various times throughout the year. The meetings provided opportunities to present updates on Council's plans, activities and issues of concern to the disability community; and to receive the Minister's feedback. Summaries from the meetings were discussed and action plans, if any, were developed at subsequent Council meetings.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The United Nations first declared December 3 as the International Day of Disabled Persons in 1992. In 2007, the name was changed to the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD). This day helps increase awareness and education about the rights and abilities of people with disabilities. IDPD is recognized in communities across Alberta. The theme, "Nothing About Us Without Us", reminds people that individuals with disabilities need to be part of the decision making process in programs, policies, and decisions that affect them. Each year, the Council works with a committee of community representatives to organize events in Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. The Council leads the provincial coordination of events and provides promotional support such as media kits, newspaper ads and a radio public service announcement. IDPD encourages Albertans to celebrate the achievements of persons with disabilities and to make full citizenship a reality for all.

Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Awards 2009

The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Awards are presented each year to honour Albertans whose outstanding leadership has changed the lives of people with disabilities.

The Awards were presented at International Day of Persons with Disabilities' celebrations around the province.

Recipients of the 2009 Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Awards:

Gary McPherson Leadership Award

The Gary McPherson Leadership Award is awarded to individual Albertans who have demonstrated outstanding leadership or achievement in enhancing or enriching the lives of persons with disabilities.

Les Pearson is an outspoken advocate for people with disabilities and dedicated to building an inclusive community where all people belong, regardless of their abilities or economic status. Les has been involved in several initiatives over the years that have had a positive impact on persons with disabilities and the community, such as integrating children with disabilities into mainstream classrooms and starting his own company to develop a program that links people with disabilities to community organizations.

Award of Excellence, Public Awareness

The Award of Excellence in Public Awareness is awarded to a person, team or organization that has increased the public's awareness of the benefits and value of a barrier-free, inclusive environment.

Don Carruthers Den Hoed was the central figure and driving force behind the 2009 Alberta Access Challenge program. Don's professionalism, networking and excellent communication skills were all contributing factors towards public awareness of this program, which demonstrated that any person with a physical or cognitive challenge can enjoy and access Alberta's parks and rugged backcountry wilderness. Through this project, Don brought together many organizations and volunteers who support Albertans with disabilities.

Dave Storey has been actively involved in the disability community in Grande Prairie since 1992. He works closely with City Council on accessibility issues for persons with disabilities. Dave is also involved with the Disabled Transportation Society and the Community Committee for Disability Issues in Grande Prairie, where he chairs an accessibility subcommittee. Dave is a strong voice for universal accessibility for all citizens.

Award of Excellence, Education

The Award of Excellence in Education is awarded to a person, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free, inclusive program, classroom or facility.

Brenda Reitsma has been actively involved in the disability community in Edmonton for many years. She has helped to open a group home and a day program for people with disabilities. She is currently the Manager of the Centre for Excellence in Learning Supports at NorQuest College where she has facilitated positive changes towards making the college a more inclusive and universally designed environment.

Award of Excellence, Employment

The Award of Excellence in Employment is awarded to a person, team or organization that has helped create a barrier-free, inclusive environment within the workplace.

Quincelle Duce is the Associate Director and Program Specialist with the Wheat Country Special Needs Society in Vulcan, Alberta. When Quinselle moved to the County of Vulcan in 1988, she worked to encourage a small group of individuals with disabilities to form the Speaking Out for the Disabled Actively group (SODA). Because of Quinselle's dedication, the SODA group has grown and now runs independent employment programs and businesses, and has provided employment for individuals with disabilities for 20 years.

Award of Excellence, Community

The Award of Excellence in Community is awarded to a person, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free, inclusive environment within their community.

Camp Health, Hope & Happiness (Camp He Ho Ha) was founded in 1960 to address the recreational needs of children who had survived polio. Fifty years later, the camp has become Alberta's premiere recreational facility for children and adults living with physical and/or mental disabilities, welcoming approximately 750 children and adults every year. The camp provides people with disabilities an opportunity to increase their quality of life and their families a chance to reenergize to meet their unique challenges.

Advice from Council

Council's response to the Alberta Advisory Committee on Health

The Council received a letter from the Minister's Advisory Committee on Health requesting input for their public consultation. The Council's Policy and Program Review Committee reviewed the documents provided, discussed the principles and themes being used for the proposed change to legislation, and submitted a draft response to Council for approval. The approved document was forwarded to the Minister's Advisory Committee on November 10, 2009.

In summary, Council's response indicated support for the inclusion of Albertans with disabilities in the Health Review. The Council supported the need for a patient-centred and integrated approach for healthcare delivery; people with disabilities often require support from a wide variety of healthcare and service providers. Council also noted that easier access to facilities and healthcare professionals who have knowledge and understanding of people with disabilities is essential to an improved quality of service. As well, options for care and support outside of traditional medical systems might be a worthwhile consideration in the range of health services. Council agreed that healthcare needs to be available to a consistent standard of care, and that care should be available to all Albertans in their respective communities.

Council's input into the Government of Alberta's response on the ratification of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Council responded to a request from Alberta Culture and Community Spirit and Seniors and Community Supports to provide input into the Government of Alberta's response on the ratification of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Convention).

The Council's response signalled its agreement with the Government of Alberta's intention to support the federal ratification of the Convention. Council noted that the ratification of the Convention fully aligns with Council's 2009–12 Strategic and Business Plans. A letter was sent to Minister Blackett indicating Council's support.

Appendix A – Meetings, Conferences and Other Events

Appendix A details Council members' commitment to meet with groups and attend events throughout the province during the past year. Council members visited a number of communities and participated in a variety of meetings.

Date of Event	Facility / Organization	Reason for Attendance
April 6 – 8, 2009	Alberta Council of Disability Services	Annual conference with major relevant stakeholder organizations.
May 6, 2009	"Measuring Up" planning event in Edmonton	Connection to Council's Strategic Plan regarding universal access.
June 4 – 6, 2009	Vitalize 2009 Conference	Connected to Council's work around communications and public policy.
June 8, 2009	Kiwanis Club Red Deer Meeting	Invited to deliver a presentation.
June 8 – 9, 2009	"Setting the Direction" Minister's Forum on Special Education in Edmonton	Strongly connected to Council's priorities.
June 10, 2009	"Greying Nation" conference opening and keynote speech	Invited as keynote speaker to highlight accessibility issues.
June 11, 2009	Accessible Housing Society (Calgary) AGM	Keynote speaker on alternate communication and functional needs.
June 18, 2009	2009 Access Challenge Book And Movie Launch	To support the concept of Universal Access in the wilderness.
June 24, 2009	Meeting with architect regarding Universal Design	Opportunity to explore means to promote Universal Design in this professional capacity.
June 24, 2009	"Measuring Up" Edmonton continued planning	Continued support for an initiative that is in line with Council's key strategic direction.
June 26, 2009	Special Olympics VIP reception & opening ceremony	Opportunity to connect with individuals who are champions for inclusion.
July 10, 2009	Canadian Paraplegic Association's Calgary Stampede Breakfast	Connect and network with the disability community in Calgary. Share Council's Strategic Plan and work towards a focus of accessibility.
July 15, 2009	Spinal Cord Initiative Alliance, University of Calgary, Accessibility & Visitability Meeting, Calgary	Opportunity to connect with the Calgary disability community and the University of Calgary on the issue of accessibility and Visitability.

Date of Event	Facility / Organization	Reason for Attendance
August 5, 2009	Meeting with Calgary Scope Society and Disability Action Hall	Connect with advocacy organization to clarify roles.
August 11, 2009	Meeting with Canadian Paraplegic Association, Edmonton	Connect with key disability leader to discuss joint efforts.
August 19, 2009	Tour of College Side, Red Deer	Opportunity to explore and understand model for supports to adults in long term care.
September 12, 2009	Brain Injury Association of Alberta, Mayor's Champagne Brunch	The speakers at the event provided valuable insight and information. Opportunity to connect with this disability group.
September 15, 2009	Meeting with various community organizations in Medicine Hat	Connect with community disability leaders to explore mutual interests.
September 25, 2009	Northeast People with Developmental Disabilities' Conference	Conference brought together information and stakeholders relating to a broad range of disability issues. Provided an excellent opportunity to connect and share information and concerns.
September 30, 2009	Universal Design and Visitability presentation at the Alberta Development Officers' Association conference	Presented a session on Universal Design in the built environment. Excellent opportunity for influence and strategic opportunity to identify key allies and issues related to Universal Design.
October 2, 2009	Canadian National Institute for the Blind Community Event	Connect with key disability organization.
October 2, 2009	Persons with Developmental Disabilities' Self-Advocates' Conference	Opportunity to clarify Council's role.
October 6, 2009	Disability and Community Studies Workshop	Invited to present disability issues in a post-secondary environment.
October 7, 2009	Presentation to Canadian Paraplegic Association Staff at Camp Health Hope and Happiness	Invited as key speaker on disability issues.
October 8, 2009	Presentation to City of Edmonton at the Mayor's Roundtable on Universal Design and Accessible Housing	Invited to provide Universal Design perspective to further "Inclusion Edmonton" initiative. Topic speaks directly to Council's key strategic direction and provides excellent opportunity to network and foster collaborative partnerships.

Date of Event	Facility / Organization	Reason for Attendance
October 18 – 20, 2009	Inspiring Education Conference, Edmonton	Opportunity to continue to provide Council's perspective into education related issues.
October 28, 2009	Presentation for Alberta Disabilities Forum Annual General Meeting	Requested update was provided to provincial disability organization.
November 16, 2009	Presentation to Medicine Hat City Council Meeting	Invited to provide update on state of Council's activities on Universal Design
November 29 and December 3, 2009	IDPD Events in Ft. McMurray, Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Vulcan	Represent Council at various venues across the province holding International Day of Persons with Disabilities events as well as to present Council's Awards to recipients and to connect with local communities.
December 2, 2009	Meeting regarding Parks inclusion	Ongoing collaboration on a topic of interest to Albertans with disabilities.
January 27, 2010	Focus Group re: Barriers to Active Living at the Alberta Centre for Active Living in Edmonton	Invited to participate as a key stakeholder and to provide perspective on Universal Design.
February 1, 2010	Non-profit Voluntary Sector discussion	Opportunity to network with disability organizations and staff.
February 6, 2010	"Picture This" Film Festival, Calgary	Connect to disability arts community.
March 10, 2010	Meeting with Multiple Sclerosis/ Excel Society	Explore possibilities for collaboration for extended living project.
March 13, 2010	Constituency Breakfast in St. Paul	Opportunity to connect with local town and business leaders and to further disability awareness.
March 19, 2010	Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL) Conference, President's Reception, Edmonton	Connect with persons with developmental disabilities and the advocacy community.
March 23, 2010	Presentation to Red Deer Self-Advocates' Meeting	Opportunity to connect with local persons with developmental disabilities' community to promote Council's Strategic Plan.

Appendix B – Council Members' Biographies

Biographies of the Council members for 2009–10 follow. Information included in the biographies was current as of March 31, 2010.

Council would like to express appreciation to the three members who left their appointments during the year. The Council reluctantly said "Goodbye" to Deputy Chair Fred Horne, MLA, and Council members Greg McMeekin and Tammy Winder. The contributions from each of these members were invaluable and appreciated, and they will be missed.

Mr. Marlin Styner — Chair

Marlin Styner of Red Deer has volunteered and worked within the disability community since 1981. He has been a member of several different committees that deal with disability issues such as the Canadian Paraplegic Association Advocacy Committee, the Provincial Barrier-Free Transportation Committee, the Spinal Cord Injury Collaboration Initiative, the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (National) and the Alberta Disability Coalition. He has been an advocate for persons with disabilities and is a public speaker on such topics as injury prevention, motivation, Universal Design and barrier-free access, transition and living with a disability, and disability and travel.

Mr. Verlyn Olson — Deputy Chair

Verlyn Olson, QC, was elected to his first term as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for Wetaskiwin-Camrose on March 3, 2008.

In addition to serving as Deputy Chair on the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, he also serves as Chair of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Committee. Mr. Olson is a member of the Standing Committees on Public Accounts, Private Bills and Health.

Prior to serving as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, Mr. Olson was a partner with the law firm Andreassen Olson Borth, where his practice focused primarily on real estate, wills, estates and counselling small businesses, assisting farmers, families, seniors and dependent adults.

Mr. Dan Bojarski

Dan Bojarski is from St. Brides, near St. Paul. He is a businessman who has demonstrated capacity and success for hiring employees who have a variety of disabilities. Dan likes to describe how these employees have also become his friends. As a result of his experiences, Dan promotes inclusive employment practices. He is an industrial engineering technologist and is a Director of the St. Paul & District Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Bryce Clarke

Bryce Clarke of Ardrossan works as a police officer with the Edmonton Police Service and has done so for the past ten years. Bryce has become proficient at public speaking and conflict resolution through his work. He has been Honorary Chair of the Edmonton Rick Hanson Wheels in Motion event for the past two years. He is also involved in the University of Alberta's Steadward Center F.E.S. program. As a quadriplegic, Bryce brings to the Council his experiences related to living with a disability in a rural area.

Mr. Mike Hambly

Mike Hambly of Calgary currently works with the Canadian Paraplegic Association in which his role is to decrease barriers for people with disabilities in the area of employment and to help individuals find work. He is a member of a number of committees, such as the Access Calgary Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, and many other related disability committees. Mr. Hambly brings a unique perspective in both having a dual disability — being totally blind and a paraplegic — and working for a disability organization. He also has a guide dog that has been specifically trained to guide him in his manual wheelchair. He is self-employed through his business, Braille It, which converts information into Braille.

Dr. John Latter

Dr. John Latter is from Calgary and is currently a professor and Medical Director of Pediatric Rehabilitation at the Alberta Children's Hospital. Dr. Latter's career includes many years of dedication and he has a special interest in the interests and needs of children and youth with physical disabilities.

Mr. Austin Mardon

Austin Mardon of Edmonton has been a member of several different committees over the years, including the Edmonton Public Library, the Alberta Disabilities Forum, the Edmonton Clubhouse Society, the Schizophrenia Society of Alberta (Edmonton Chapter) and the Schizophrenia Society of Alberta (Provincial Chapter).

He lives with a mental illness and believes that the inclusion of people with mental illnesses in the community is important and can substantially improve the quality of life of persons who live with a severe mental illness. In October of 2007, Austin was invested with the Order of Canada for Mental Health Advocacy.

Ms. Diane Ridley

Diane Ridley of Thorsby brings a cross-disability perspective to the Council and a wide range of experience with issues that affect persons with disabilities living in rural areas, such as transportation and isolation. She has served on several different boards at the municipal level and has extensive experience with numerous government programs including Handicapped Children's Services (currently called "Family Support for Children with Disabilities"), Alberta Aids to Daily Living, and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH). Diane also has a personal commitment to advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities as her daughter, now a young adult, has had a disability since birth.

Mr. Brad Robertson

Brad Robertson of Calgary has been a strong advocate of people with disabilities through the Disability Action Hall for the past seven years. Brad has a developmental disability-pervasive developmental disorder and an obsessive compulsive disorder. He has been a client advocate for the Calgary Society of Persons with Disabilities and has also been involved with Boy Scouts as a Beaver leader for the past 17 years. He has worked as a self-employed courier in Calgary for the past six years and a courier for a reproduction company in Calgary for nine years. Brad is a very thoughtful person, with a great memory and is very committed to the improvement of services for all Albertans with disabilities.

Ms. Amber Skoog

Amber Skoog of Stirling, near Lethbridge, lives with reduced vision. Amber has a Nursing Assistant Certificate, a Phlebotomy Certificate and a Business Administration Certificate. She has considerable work experience with seniors and persons with disabilities. She currently works as an alternate format editor and educational assistant with the Lethbridge College. Amber is a good listener, has very good communication skills and is knowledgeable and dedicated to assisting those with disabilities.

Mrs. Kuen Tang

Kuen Tang of Edmonton currently works as a client services coordinator with the Canadian Paraplegic Association. Kuen also creates logos, letterers graphic novels, and works with wood. She has previously taught computer skills to people with disabilities and at-risk youth at the Ability Society of Alberta.

Kuen brings to the Council her experiences volunteering at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, where she demonstrated life-management skills during Spinal Cord Injury Week and Children's Wheelchair Camp. Kuen has been recognized for her ground-breaking graduation from the University of Alberta, earning a Bachelor of Elementary Education. She continues to demonstrate that it is possible for a person with quadriplegia to achieve great success.

Ms. Pamela Wagner

Pamela Wagner is from Medicine Hat. She is the associate Executive Director of the REDI Enterprises Society, a non-profit organization that specializes in employment for adults with disabilities and other Albertans who require employment assistance, as well as support to individuals to live and participate as community members. Pamela has many years of progressive responsibilities in the field and has a passion for work in this area. She sits on the Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work, among other volunteer responsibilities.

Ms. Carmen Wyton

Carmen Wyton of St. Albert is currently the president and CEO of Special Olympics Alberta. Carmen has also been the President and Executive Director of the Multiple Sclerosis Society (Alberta Division), the Director of development for the Arthritis Society (Alberta and NWT Division), the Managing Director of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and the Executive Director of the Southeast Edmonton Seniors Association. Carmen is well known and respected for her knowledge of and commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities. She is recognized for her ability to develop relationships with all stakeholders and applying innovative programming to meet the needs of organizations and clients. She is also well known nationally for the many talents she brings to the Council. As Carmen herself has Multiple Sclerosis, she also brings to the Council the perspective of having a progressive disability.

Mr. Fred Horne — Deputy Chair (to Spring 2010)

MLA Fred Horne was elected to his first term as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for Edmonton-Rutherford on March 3, 2008. In addition to his regular duties as MLA, Mr. Horne is also the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, he serves as Chair of the Standing Committee on Health, is a member of the Cabinet Policy Committee on Health, and is also on the Agenda and Priorities Committee. Mr. Horne previously served as the Co-Chair of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Health. Prior to serving with the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, Mr. Horne worked as a health policy consultant for over 25 years, leading many initiatives to improve access and quality in Canadian public health care. He has worked extensively with provincial governments, regional health authorities, health professional bodies, and research organizations across Canada and internationally.

Mr. Greg McMeekin (to April 2010)

Greg McMeekin, born and raised in Calgary, was the first person with a severe physical disability to be integrated into the regular school system in Calgary. Through hard work and determination, Mr. McMeekin graduated from high school and went on to earn his Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Mass Communications from Carleton University. He has carried those values into his future aspirations and achievements. Mr. McMeekin has worked with the City of Calgary Parks and Recreation — Recreational Services for the Disabled. He is a member of the Accessible Housing Society of Calgary and the Calgary Handi-Bus Board of Directors, as well as the Calgary Health Region Seating Clinic Advisory Committee. He is proud to be a member of organizations that work to enhance the lives of Calgarians with disabilities and considers it an honour and privilege to serve Albertans with disabilities.

Ms. Tammy Winder (to February 2010)

Tammy Winder of Lethbridge brings a parent's perspective to disabilities as she has a daughter with severe hearing loss combined with developmental and medical challenges. Ms. Winder has worked for over 20 years with a wide range of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds and disabling conditions, such as mental health illnesses, depressive and anxiety disorders, visual and hearing impairments, and developmental disabilities. She is well-known for being a strong advocate for people who require services and has provided her counselling expertise in the areas of financial, employment, education, crisis intervention, life/social skills with adults, one-on-one and in a group setting. Ms. Winder currently works as an outreach worker with Alberta Health Services, Seniors Mental Health Outreach.

Financial Information

Council is supported by a Secretariat through the Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports. Expenditure Officer authority resides with the Ministry. Council is not directly responsible for its budget or expenditures but does have input into decisions that affect how resources are allocated. Council also receives reports as to expenditures related to its activities. The financial figures reported in this report are unaudited. Council's expenditures are also noted as a line item in the Ministry's annual report.

Council is allocated a budget each year to cover the expenses associated with meeting its mandate and business plan objectives. Typical expenses include honoraria and expenses for members, meeting costs, IDPD contracts, and production of newsletters and Annual Report. Council members are paid honoraria in line with current Committee Remuneration Orders as set by Corporate Human Resources and approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The Order in use is 466/2007, Appendix 3 effective April 1, 2009, Schedule 1 and can be found at http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/orders/orders_in_council/2007/1007/2007_466.htm. Council's budget for 2009–10 was allocated at $226,000 and expended at $201,155.

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THE PREMIER'S COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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